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THE CULT
OF
CONTENT

by
NOEL
LESLIE

Boston
THE PORTRAIT
COMPANY

THE CULT OF CONTENT

By the same Author.

THREE PLAYS:

WASTE :: THE WAR-FLY

FOR KING AND COUNTRY

THE CULT OF CONTENT

By
NOEL LESLIE
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BOSTON
THE FOUR SEAS COMPANY
1921

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PR 6023
E 8 C 8
1921

The Four Seas Press
Boston, Mass., U. S. A.

MAR 24 1921

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no. 1

To MY MOTHER AND FATHER

*"We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."*

SHAKESPEARE

THE CULT OF CONTENT

CHARACTERS

THE NAMELESS ONE

FAITH

HOPE

LOVE

HONESTY

ENDEAVOR

PATIENCE

A YOUNG MAN

AN OLD WOMAN

A YOUNG WOMAN

AN OLD MAN

TIME

The Time of Sleep.

SCENE

The Interior of The Court of Interpretation in the Palace of Dreams.

The scene discloses a room semi-circular in shape with the form and appearance of one quarter of an enormous hollow ball of pure gold. It reflects a wonderful amber light from all points save one. The exception is an arched passageway, the only means of ingress or egress, at the floor level up C. The Dreamers from the Land of the Waking enter from this tunnel, which is of sufficient size for a man to pass through upstanding and with comfort. Above and upon this arch stand three thrones, the middle that of THE NAMELESS ONE. This is set on a dais, slightly back from and higher than the other two.

At equal distances from one another and with similar distinctions in height, six more thrones are set; three down R. and three down L. In this manner, the two thrones furthest from the C. are placed with their dais resting on the floor level, and at the same distance from the curve of the wall as that of the throne at the apex, occupied by THE NAMELESS ONE.

The floor is of cloth of gold.

Two flights of steps, black as jet but carpeted with gold, lead up to the thrones at the R. and L. of the central and highest. All of the thrones are imposing and fitted with canopies capable of projecting downward circles of light sufficient only to illumine the occupant seated directly below. The central throne is more imposing than the others.

THE CURTAIN RISES. A golden glow radiates from the Court. THE NAMELESS ONE, an awe-inspiring, mysterious figure in robes of purple, sits on the highest throne. His face is draped in a shimmering, impenetrable veil. The thrones at his immediate R. and L. are vacant.

The three thrones to the R. starting from down stage, are occupied by the female figures of FAITH, HOPE and LOVE.

FAITH is a brunette, robed in blue.

HOPE is fair, and clad in silver.

LOVE is dark, wearing gold.

The three thrones to the L. starting from down stage, are occupied by the male figures of PATIENCE, ENDEAVOR and HONESTY.

PATIENCE is an ancient, garbed in grey.

ENDEAVOR is a sturdy fellow in his prime, dressed in serviceable cloth of brown.

HONESTY is a fair young man of open countenance, in robes of pure white.

There is a pause after which a deep-toned bell tolls, once. The light slowly changes from gold to blue.

The scene takes on an uncanny, mysterious appearance. The figures, hereinafter called THE SIX, become indistinct but THE NAMELESS ONE remains brilliantly illuminated throughout the entire action of the play.

A few seconds after the tolling of the bell, the Court being in comparative darkness, the silence is broken by

THE NAMELESS ONE

A Dreamer comes. I here and now decree
His vision to be happy and complete.

THE SIX

We bow before the judgment of our King.

[Darkness, save from the throne in the C. Enter, from the passageway, THE YOUNG MAN, a Dreamer from the Waking World. A blue spotlight makes him visible. He wears a one-piece tunic of cream-colored cloth trimmed with gold. His head, arms and legs are bare, his feet shod with sandals. He comes down C.]

THE NAMELESS ONE

Whence com'st thou?

THE YOUNG MAN

From the weary, waking world.

THE NAMELESS ONE

And wherefore com'st thou?

THE YOUNG MAN

I seek peace and rest.

THE NAMELESS ONE

By what power hast thou passed Our golden gates?

THE YOUNG MAN

The power to every earthly dreamer given,
The power of soothing, soul-refreshing sleep.

THE NAMELESS ONE

There are few Dreamers in thy far off land.

THE YOUNG MAN

Perchance because most dreamers dream in vain.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Art thou so tired of Waking?

THE YOUNG MAN

If to wake

Is but to seek, then am I tired indeed!

THE NAMELESS ONE

What is it that thou seek'st?

THE YOUNG MAN

I seek to rest.

I seek peace in the quiet land of dreams.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Be comforted! Thou hast not sought in vain.

If thou but pass the test, I promise thee

A vision of pure truth, to clear thine eyes

Of all the rheum that blinds the waking world:

To free thy soul, caught in the net of life,

That it may soar, in peace, unto its rest.

THE YOUNG MAN

A test! What test?

THE NAMELESS ONE

Art willing to submit?

[THE YOUNG MAN *bows his head.*]

Thou must possess sublime sincerity.

'Tis all We ask, but more than all can give.

THE YOUNG MAN

Proceed!

THE NAMELESS ONE

Turn thou thy face away.

[*He does so.*]

Look up!
[*A white spotlight shines full in THE YOUNG MAN'S face.*]

Now, answer me with truth. Dost thou employ
The power of Faith?

THE YOUNG MAN
Yea, truly.
[*FAITH is lit up on her throne.*]

THE NAMELESS ONE
It is well!
Doth Hope eternal spring within thy breast?

THE YOUNG MAN
It is my guiding star that points to rest.
[*HOPE is illuminated.*]

THE NAMELESS ONE
And Love? Can'st thou declare that She is thine?

THE YOUNG MAN
Yea, that I can indeed; for I am wed
Most happily.

[*LOVE is lit.*]

THE NAMELESS ONE
And yet art not content?

THE YOUNG MAN
I seek content of soul and peace of mind.

THE NAMELESS ONE
Thou art not truly wed. How blind the man
Who cannot comprehend that noble plan!
Perchance I'll give thee sight. Art honest, then?

THE YOUNG MAN
No man hath ever called me otherwise.
[*HONESTY is lit.*]

THE NAMELESS ONE

While waking, hast thou striven for the best?
Hast thou Endeavor?

THE YOUNG MAN

For the betterment
Of others, or myself?

THE NAMELESS ONE

The test implies,
Embraces both. Speak! Say'st thou yea or nay?

THE YOUNG MAN

My earnest hath been given free to all
As for myself.

[ENDEAVOR *is illuminated.*]

Thus have I sought in vain.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Yet once more, friend. Hast thou learnt Patience?

THE YOUNG MAN

I am a humble student at his feet.

[PATIENCE *becomes visible.*]

THE NAMELESS ONE

Trust on, hope on, love on to victory.
Be patient, just and honest in the strife.
Life is to struggle, Death alone brings peace.

THE YOUNG MAN

'Tis good to struggle.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Better 'tis to rest.

Thou must win over life to gain Content.
Welcome, true Dreamer, to the Land of Dreams!

[*The golden light has gradually replaced the blue.
At this point the latter is entirely extinguished, as
also are the individual lights above the thrones.*]

THE SIX

Welcome, True Dreamer, to the Land of Dreams.
Through us shalt thou attain to peace and rest.

THE YOUNG MAN

Through you? Must I go further? Is there more
Than dreaming, ere I win unto the goal?

PATIENCE

Do not forget me.

ENDEAVOR

I am at thy side.

HOPE

My star burns bright.

FAITH

My lamp is ever lit.

HONESTY

I know no fear.

LOVE

Nor I. Remember me!

THE YOUNG MAN

Show me the way!

THE NAMELESS ONE

There are two ways to peace.
The first to profit by experience
Of others.

THE YOUNG MAN

I have trod that path in vain.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Thou did'st not follow it unto the end.
It is a common fault in careless youth,
This lack of perseverance. Though thou hast
Both Patience and Endeavor, thou appliest

Too little of the one, and not enough
Of what remains. To persevere, my son,
Thou must not know defeat.

PATIENCE

He tired of me.

HOPE

And me put out at once.

ENDEAVOR

Though true to me,
We could not do it all.

FAITH and LOVE

Us he ignored.

THE NAMELESS ONE

The lesson of experience is long,
Too long for youth to learn, for youth is sick;
Sick with a waking sickness, hard to cure,
The sickness of unreasonableness;
Touched with a fever subtle, dangerous,
The fever known as over-confidence.

THE YOUNG MAN

And what the other way?

THE NAMELESS ONE

List carefully.

The second path to peace leads to this place
Of dream interpretation. Here and now,
If thou art willing, can'st thou meet with rest.

[There is a slight pause.]

THE SIX

'Tis in thy power now to be at peace.

[A longer pause.]

THE NAMELESS ONE

What, hesitation?

THE YOUNG MAN

I know not why

But, with the word upon the very tip
Of this my tongue, I find it subtly tied.
The long-sought key doth tremble in my hand
And yet I fear to place it in the lock
That seals the door to Light. How can I pause
When but a word will fling it open wide?

THE NAMELESS ONE

So works the natural instinct of the blind,
Who fear to face the dazzle of the sun
When sight returns to them. The Waking fear
The brilliant mysteries of Silent Sleep.

THE YOUNG MAN

The fear of Sleep?

THE SIX

The Silent Sleep called Death.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Silent to those who wake. For those who Dream
It hath the comfort of a myriad tongues.

THE YOUNG MAN

Then must I die, ere I can meet with rest?

THE NAMELESS ONE

Death is to rest. To die, to be at peace.

THE YOUNG MAN

Is there no rest in Waking?

THE NAMELESS ONE

There is none.

THE YOUNG MAN

I would not die! Have I then dreamt in vain?

THE NAMELESS ONE

Dreaming to thee is vain?

THE YOUNG MAN
Illusion.

THE NAMELESS ONE
Illusion is more real than waking thought,
Illusion is the Spirit of Pure Truth,
Which melts the mist that wraps the mystic world
In dense, material mesh. Illusion is
Reality. Their cousins told thee that.

THE YOUNG MAN
Their cousins?

THE NAMELESS ONE
Day-dreams, in thy waking hours,
Are cousins to these Priests and Priestesses.
They reach the spirit in a form of Sleep,
Striving to teach the Cult of the Content.

THE YOUNG MAN
How shall I find contentment?

THE NAMELESS ONE
Learn of these,
The Leaders of the Cult thou would'st embrace.
They teach experience in its many forms:
But thou must gain a deeper sense of truth
Ere thou can'st hope to meet with full success.

THE YOUNG MAN
Is not Truth, honesty?

THE NAMELESS ONE
No single thing
Is that most wondrous gift. Truth is compact
Of ev'ry bit of reason, ev'ry thought
That tends to give a bias to the right.
Truth is immeasurable and sublime,
Embracing all things. No mere, petty bond
Binding the puny conscience of a man!

THE YOUNG MAN

O, tell me more!

THE NAMELESS ONE

Not now, it is not meet.

But, after this sweet sleep, when thou dost wake,
Ponder in secret on these mysteries.

This dream shall be to thee more real far
Than any waking hour. A brighter star
Than Hope I kindle now within thy breast.
It is the Joy of Death!

THE YOUNG MAN

Ah, let me rest

Within His bosom now!

THE NAMELESS ONE

Thy chance did pass

A moment since, when thou did'st hesitate
To choose the second path. Be comforted;
'Twas pre-ordained. Be grateful for this dream
Which hath revealed to thee some Joy of Sleep.

THE YOUNG MAN

'Tis strange, I do no longer fear to die,
As most men do! Why should the Waking fear?

THE NAMELESS ONE

It is the dread of the invisible.
What is unknown creates a kind of cloak
Of horror, to the earth-bound mind of man.
It is because no soul hath e'er returned
To tell the living of the mystic dead.

THE YOUNG MAN

Why hath no soul returned?

THE NAMELESS ONE

It is because

The Waking place small confidence in dreams.

When Wakers will to woo the Sleeping World
As eagerly as they woo earthly things,
Then will the Sleepers gladly come to them
And all the mysteries shall melt away.

[*The bell tolls, once.*]

Dost hear that bell? Another dreamer comes,
A sad ensample of the mortal moil
And base defilement which doth mar our fame,
Th' eternal ecstasy and bliss of Death.

THE YOUNG MAN

Must I away?

THE NAMELESS ONE

Thy dream hath but begun.

Mount to this throne, and seat thee by my side.

[*THE YOUNG MAN ascends to the throne by way of
the right hand steps. The golden light fades.*]

Sit down and be observant; dream and learn.

[*As he sits, the throne lights up. A pause. Darkness,
save from the two occupied upper thrones.*]

ENTER AN OLD WOMAN, clad in a ragged garment of rusty black. A blue spotlight makes her visible.]

Behold a lonesome Waker from thy world,
Whose visions lead her toward this Sleeping Land,
And sometimes let her stray within Our Courts.
She comes from wandering far, in nightmare wilds,
Those fearsome forests just without Our Gates.
Look at her tattered rags! Poor, hapless thing!
The most minutest spark burns in her soul,
Yet 'tis sufficient to light her here.

THE YOUNG MAN

And may she too conceive the Joy of Death?

THE NAMELESS ONE

In time she must. As yet she worships life,
Striving therein to find reality.

When will ye mortals learn the wondrous truth!
Reality is offered you in dreams.
Are not the Dreams of Man more brilliant bright
Than any sun that gives to earth its light?
The greatest Light is Truth, and in His beams
We flourish, in this Death-blest Land of Dreams.

THE YOUNG MAN

Can she not see me?

THE NAMELESS ONE

No. 'Tis I alone,

And any Virtues that she may possess,
Her eye can here discover. Ask of Them,
Which of the Six she can asserverate
Is hers, if any.

THE YOUNG MAN

Tell me, Virtues mine,

Which of You can she summon in her sleep?

THE SIX

She hath no power to summon one of us.
She hath no claim on aught that we possess.

THE YOUNG MAN

I pity her. But how is she to learn?

THE NAMELESS ONE

She must be taught to dream another way.
As yet she can see no-one but herself,
Poor, weeping fool! She scarce can strain her sight
To see me on my throne.

[He calls to her.]

Look up, I say!

[As She obeys, the blue light brightens.]

THE OLD WOMAN

Ah! Who art Thou?

THE NAMELESS ONE

I am The Nameless One.

THE OLD WOMAN

I cannot see Thy face, nor yet my way.

THE NAMELESS ONE

No man can see my face till he hath found
What thou and all the Waking Ones have lost,
The Light of Truth, the Way of Dreams and Death.

THE OLD WOMAN

Alack, alack! This place is very dark!
How can I see to wander through this wood?
Oh, how I loathe the night! The whisp'ring trees
Are still. That Voice was Conscience, I suppose?
'Tis silent now; there's not the slightest sound;
And e'en that wily bat who flew to guide
My feet from out this maze into the day,
Hath ceased to flutter. What was that I heard
Before the Voice? That deep-toned, warning bell?
It tolled as for the dead, th'accursed dead!
Oh, how I hate this dark and dismal place!
Would I might wake! *What if that I am dead!*
The bell? That damn'd bell . . . it tolled for me!
No, no! I am not dead! I will not die!
I cannot face the terrors of the grave,
To be confined within four clammy walls!
I must have life, and breath! I must awake!

THE NAMELESS ONE

First must thou read the lesson of this dream.

THE OLD WOMAN

It is the Voice! 'Tis Conscience come again.
I'm listening.

[Even as she speaks the golden light begins to return.]

THE NAMELESS ONE

I am The Nameless One.

'Tis not so dark that thou can'st here forget
The many times we two have talked before.

THE OLD WOMAN

O, Nameless One! Tell me that I do dream.
If I but dream, I shall anon awake
To laugh away the folly of my fear.
I fear to sleep lest I should dream of Death.
There bides a growing terror in my breast
For, some dark night, His minions will come
To beckon me unto the silent tomb
Of fatal sleep, from which no mortal wakes.
Then my dead soul will cease to pulse her way
Within this breast. A cold and lifeless thing
I shall return to dust through foul decay!

THE NAMELESS ONE

Fool! Wilt thou never learn the simple truth?
There is no life in Waking. Darest thou
To speak of Glorious Sleep as foul decay?
O, wretched cipher! When thou seest Death
'Twill be to grovel in abandoned grief
That thou hast so misjudged The One True Light.
And the poor, pulsing thing thou call'st thy soul
Is but thy heart, a feeble, waking thing;
A transitory form of flesh and blood.
The soul hath small relation to the heart;
The soul is seated in the sleeping Mind,
The one immortal thing thou dost possess.
But thou hast smothered it from very birth;
Fenced it around with foolish forms of fear.
O, wilt thou not be wise at last, and Dream?
Let thus the struggling soul begin to grow
Until it fills thy being with its breath,
To bring, at length, the perfect bliss of Death!

THE OLD WOMAN

Then have I lived in vain. What must I do
To gain the glorious bliss of which thou speak'st?

THE NAMELESS ONE

Six sovereign Virtues must thou first acquire.
Come then in sleep unto this Dreaming Place
To learn of Us The Cult of The Content.

THE OLD WOMAN

Content? 'Tis what I strive for!

THE NAMELESS ONE

Strive again,
But henceforth to fulfilment through thy dreams.
Dreams are eternal. Life, like frost on glass,
Melts with the rising sun. So mortals pass.

THE OLD WOMAN

Name me the Virtues, that I may begin
Before I grow too old to change my ways.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Change knows no age. But ponder deep on this.
Now is the pregnant time, the only time
Is now. The present, O remember this,
The present holds the key to happiness
[*A pause. As each of THE SIX is named, He or She
becomes visible.*]

The Virtues Six are these. Faith, Hope and Love;
Immaculate Triumvirate of Truth.
Then Patience and Endeavor; These thou know'st
But heretofore hast used in wrongful sense.
Lastly, the rarest Virtue, Honesty.

THE OLD WOMAN

This is a wondrous dream, so different
From those dread, nightmare visions of my past.

THE NAMELESS ONE

They were but whisperings of evil thoughts,
Dwelling without the confines of True Dreams.

THE OLD WOMAN

Let me not wake again! It seems to me
So futile now to live. Would I might die!
'Twere best to dream forever. Can it be?

THE NAMELESS ONE

Not yet. Thy mortal span is not complete.
Go back to Waking, to thy world of lies,
Of cat-like tricks, deceit and mincing words.
But take with thee the knowledge of the Truth,
And spread it broadcast through the noisome earth.
Nourish the vital spark within thy soul,
Set like a jewel in the Sleeping Mind.
The more thou dream'st, the brighter it will burn;
The sooner will thy soul to Sleep return.
[*The last touch of blue now fades from the scene
which is again flooded with golden light.*]

THE OLD WOMAN

When may I come again?

THE NAMELESS ONE

Whene'er thou wilt.
Each night, in Sleep, the soul can slip away
Here, in the Halls of Mem'ry, to distil
All thought, and use it for the Perfect Will.

THE OLD WOMAN

I thank Thee for this dream. Lo! even now
All things do seem more real. Ere I go,
O Nameless One, I crave a boon!

THE NAMELESS ONE

What boon?

THE OLD WOMAN

To see Thy face.

THE NAMELESS ONE

It is not possible.

Till thou dost die, thou can'st not see my face.

THE OLD WOMAN

Would I might see it now!

THE NAMELESS ONE

Dream on to peace!

[THE OLD WOMAN *exits.*]

THE YOUNG MAN

The Dreamers plead for death!

THE NAMELESS ONE

Yea, every one.

So comes each weary soul, earth-sick with fears;
Black, nightmare fears of terrors unexpressed,
To find in Dreams reality and rest.

THE YOUNG MAN

Reality and Death are one, I ween.
Was not Illusion, too, Reality?
It follows, then, Illusion is Death.
Is't possible for man to comprehend
Unto the uttermost reality,
The sum and substance of eternity?

THE NAMELESS ONE

It is not possible. There hast thou hit
Upon the very source of Man's Despair.
The Waking Man walks in a kind of daze.
Mundane affairs cloy up his finer sense,
The gabbling after mere mortalities
Absorbs much time that should be spent in thought.
Man's worldly scheme of things is tangled up
Into a ball which none can straighten out

In mortal span; nor yet while mortals last;
For none save Death, the Great Unraveller,
Can weave from out Life's skein the perfect peace.
Death is Man's destiny, and Dreams alone
Can bring him to Content right speedily.

THE SIX

Through Dreams may mortal man achieve Content.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Another comes to speak to thee of Truth.

THE YOUNG MAN

I heard no warning bell! No darkness hides
The Virtues from the eyes of those who sleep!

THE NAMELESS ONE

There is no need. This blessed one who comes
Hath all the freedom of Our Land of Dreams,
In that she made a sacrifice of Love,
A sacrifice supreme. Deliberately
Did she refuse the ecstasy of Death.

[*Enter THE YOUNG WOMAN, clad in purple. THE
SIX rise just prior to her entrance and remain stand-
ing, motionless.*]

THE YOUNG MAN

[*Rising.*]

She is my mate!

[*He calls to her.*]

My own beloved wife!

THE NAMELESS ONE

She cannot hear thy voice nor see thy face
Until I purposely do wish it so.

[*He motions THE YOUNG MAN to sit.*]

THE YOUNG MAN

[*Sitting.*]

Why hath she come?

THE NAMELESS ONE

She seeks thee in her sleep.

THE YOUNG MAN

I shall be by her side when she awakes!

THE NAMELESS ONE

Hast thou not learned it yet? The precious time
Is now, and only now. Then learn again.

[*He waves His hands at THE SIX, who seat themselves.*]

Welcome, My Daughter!

[*THE YOUNG WOMAN has been standing C. She now turns with a superb gesture, lifting her arms in greeting.*]

THE YOUNG WOMAN

Greeting, Nameless One!

I come to pray Thee for my husband's soul.
Grant that each night we may dissolve in Dreams,
Together to the crest lit by the beams
Of Truth, let our twin spirits creep,
And so slip gently down the slope of Sleep.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Thy husband hath it in his power to Dream,
As all who wake have.

THE YOUNG WOMAN

Oh, he is a man

Lacking the essentials of the Dreamer's mind.
He is too full of waking thoughts and deeds;
Base, earthy thoughts; and rarely doth he think
On aught but pleasures of a worldly kind.
He loves me with his body, but his soul . . . ?
Ah! How the body hides that worthier thing!
Therefore I pray him Dreams, that he may see
How mean a thing is matter, how divine
And precious are the treasures of the soul.
Why is it that our men do Dreams ignore?

Perchance we women with our souls love more
Than with our bodies. So, Dear Nameless One,
If it be possible, give me the power
To guide my husband to Thy Land of Dreams.
Give me his soul as wholly as his breath,
That we together may learn more of Death!

THE NAMELESS ONE

The love of woman is a wondrous thing!
Why thinkest thou that I can this decree?

THE YOUNG WOMAN

Thou hast the power to do whate'er Thou wilt.
Did'st Thou not stay mine entrance into Sleep
Because I would not leave my husband's side?
So, I beseech Thee, teach his purblind soul
To soar with mine in Dreams. Deny me not,
And daily will I do my waking task
Ungrudgingly, nor will I ever ask
Of Thee a boon or recompense again.
This do I swear, e'en though we be the last
To enter into Sleep. Though all the Worlds,
Living, and yet unborn, pass on before
To their eternal peace; it will be best
If we but come together, here to rest.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Thou would'st be wed in body, mind and soul,
In spirit, human and divine, for aye?

THE YOUNG WOMAN

That is my great desire! Say me not nay!
Or have I asked too much, O Nameless One?

THE NAMELESS ONE

Thou can'st not ask too much of Me, my child.
Nor shalt thou ever ask of Me in vain.
For where would stand Our Cult, which here we teach,
If we did fail to carry out its creed?
[*He rises.*]

My Daughter, thou hast asked a perfect gift,
And thus, right gladly, do I answer thee.

[*He takes the hand of THE YOUNG MAN who becomes immediately visible to THE YOUNG WOMAN.*]

Take thou thy husband.

[*She gives a cry of joy.*]

Go to her, My son!

[*THE YOUNG MAN has stretched out his arms in response to a similar gesture from THE YOUNG WOMAN. Slowly, as if entranced, he descends the steps. She remains C. transfixed with rapture. THE YOUNG MAN approaches eagerly, yet gently, and takes her in his arms. She gradually realises that it is indeed he.*]

THE YOUNG WOMAN

My more than husband! Lover, spirit, soul!

THE YOUNG MAN

My more than wife! My guardian, comfort, guide!
I know now wherefore thou hast sadly sighed
And pined in secret. I was worse than blind,
Base and material, since I could not see
The beauteous dream thou hast desired for me.
I felt some yearning for diviner things,
But feared to give Imagination wings.

THE YOUNG WOMAN

I feared lest thou would'st scoff. I did not dare
To risk thy ridicule.

THE YOUNG MAN

My phantasies
Seemed weak and foolish in my waking hours;
The fond illusions of a weary brain.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Man's waking thoughts are far too dim to pierce
What dream-minds can but guess at. Otherwise

Man would be more than mortal. When you wake
No clear conception of this dream you'll find,
The business of life will blur the mind.
But ere you go, my children, come to Me.
I have some words of comfort to impart.
[*They mount the stairs, one on either side, and sit,*
THE YOUNG MAN *at His R.,* THE YOUNG WOMAN
at His L.]

To gain what you desire, strive day by day
And night by night, to pierce the heavy veil
Which hides from you Divine Reality.
Live for each moment. Try, and so succeed.
Pause, now and then, to take a firmer hold
On pleasure and on pain. The strength employed
Determines both the keenness of delight
And dullness of the pain that will ensue.
Indulge in day-dreams, with the help of These.

[*He indicates* THE SIX.]

Beware of haste! Life's secret lies in tasting.
Food swallowed slowly seldom goes a-wasting.
So is it with the mind. Thought must distil
To wisdom find. Seek ceaselessly Content.
So will your Dreams more and more vivid grow;
And Dreams are vivid when each nerve doth throb
In rhythm with the Supernatural.
Thus may man gain his ultimate release
From clinging mists that blear his waking eyes,
Marring the full enjoyment of life's span.
Then, at the last, the clouds will pass away,
Absorbed by Suns of sheer Reality.
Thus endeth life. There is no more to know,
Save Death, from which Reality doth spring:
And Death is all, for all Eternity.

[*Enter an OLD MAN, clothed in a puce-colored robe.*
THE SIX *rise and incline Their heads as he comes*
down C.]

Your Dream is nearly o'er. Welcome, Old Friend!
Yea, more than welcome to The Home of Sleep!

THE OLD MAN

I greet Thee, Nameless One!

THE NAMELESS ONE

Art come to claim
Thy well-deserved reward, or dost thou fear
The nightmare forests and the dark without?

THE OLD MAN

I saw no dark, nor anything to fear.
'Tis only Wakers dread what is so dear
To us who Dream of Death and, dreaming, learn
The secret of the Sleep for which we yearn.

THE NAMELESS ONE

Thou would'st not wake again?

THE OLD MAN

I thank Thee, no!
Too long I've trod the waking paths of woe.
Too long have sins of mortal man distressed
My life-sick, tortured soul. Too long I've bent
An aching back to tasks of man's caprice.
Some, vast unending works, some petty things.
Too long a weary, fevered brain I've lent
To whims and fancies of illiterate fools.
Too long I've witnessed War and Crime and Greed
Lay waste a world of Good by Evil ruled;
A world where flourish Lust and brutal Power,
Fed by the meannesses of human hearts!
Too long, I say, have I supported this,
And gladly have I laid my body by;
Right gladly bade mortality farewell.
Joy came to me, that selfsame Joy of Dreams.
The hope of years set free Immortal Mind,
Released my soul which now returns to Thee,
Interpreter of Life and Love and All.

O, Perfect Culture of Supreme Content,
I claim fulfilment of my Dreams from Thee!
[THE OLD MAN *falls on his knees.*]

THE NAMELESS ONE
[*To the Two.*]

Your Dream must end. Learn what you can from it,
And travel toward Content.
[*At a motion from Him they descend. At the foot
of the steps THE YOUNG MAN halts.*]

THE YOUNG MAN
Oh, let us stay!

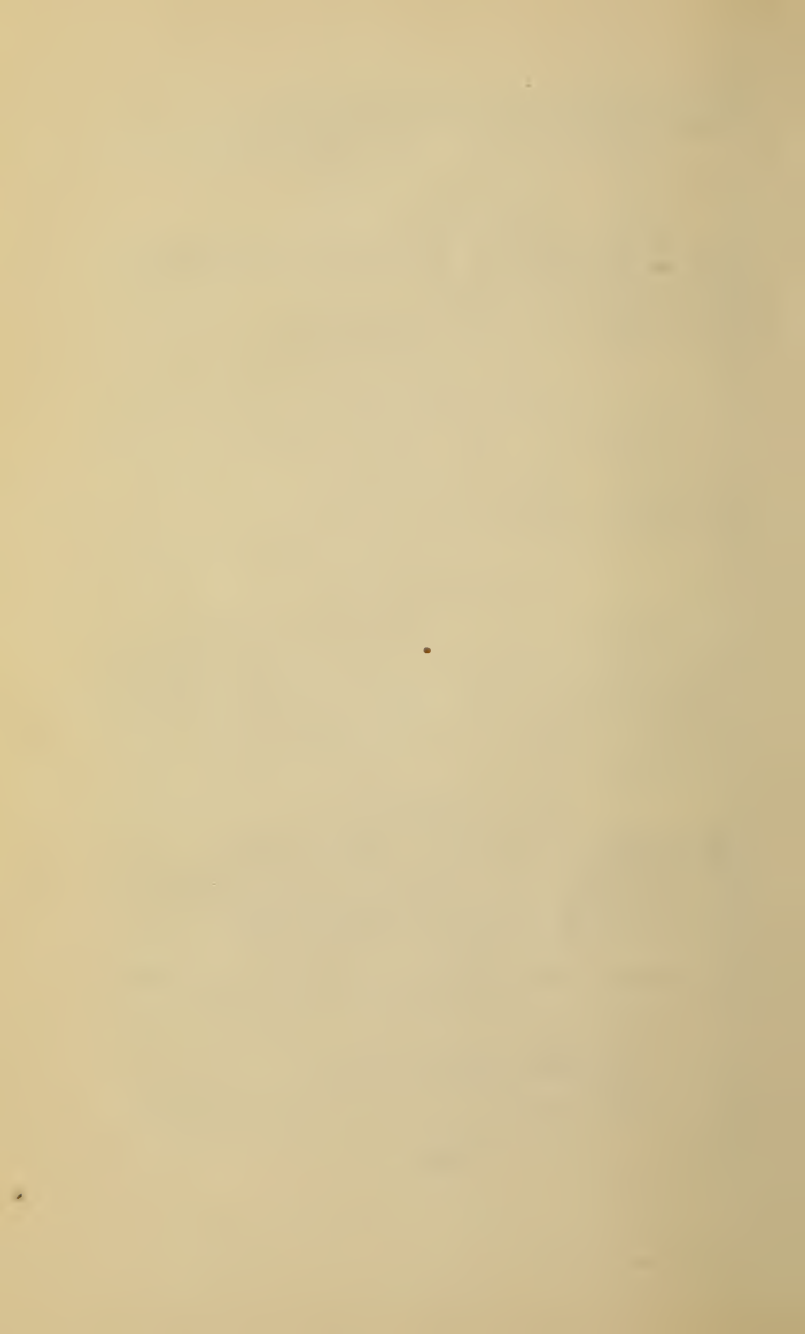
THE NAMELESS ONE
It cannot be. Farewell!
[THE YOUNG MAN *hesitates.*]

THE YOUNG WOMAN
Dear husband, come!
[*She holds out her hand. After a slight pause he
goes to her and takes it. As their hands meet THE
SIX, who have remained standing since the entrance
of THE OLD MAN, incline Their heads and sit. THE
YOUNG MAN and YOUNG WOMAN exit.*]

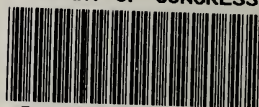
THE NAMELESS ONE
I do thy claim acknowledge. Thou art free!
Arise, and never more breathe mortal breath.
[THE OLD MAN *rises as does THE NAMELESS ONE.*]
Look on My face and Know, for I am Death!

His hands are lifted in the act of raising the veil when

THE CURTAIN FALLS.



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